

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-13

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ADP-00 NSC-10 NSCE-00 PM-03 L-02 DPW-01

IO-03 PRS-01 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 DODE-00

EUR-10 RSR-01 /070 W

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R 011243Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5426

USDEL JEC PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 13894

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINT, MILI, VS

SUBJECT: MR 3 SITREP - 1 AUGUST 1973

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION SAIGON INFO DAO/SAIGON AND USSAG NKP  
1 AUGUST. REPEATED FOR YOU

QUOTE:

BIEN HOA 0349

1. FIGHTING SLACKED OFF NOTICEBLBY IN MR3 DURING 48 HOURS ENDING  
0800 AUGUST 1. MR3 G2 REPORTED 43 CLASHES; 24 IN FIRST 24 HOURS  
AND 19 IMPVOVPLASSIWHOIGS; 14 GOUND CONTACTS, 16 ATTACKS BY FIRE;  
THREE SMALL ARMS HARRASSMENTS, EIGHT DETONATIONS OF MINES AND  
GRENADES (INCLUDING ONE CIVILIAN), AND TWO ANTI-AIRCRAFT FIRINGS;  
NINE IN BINH DUONG, EIGHT IN PHUOC LONG, FIVE EACH IN BINH LONG,  
TAY NINH AND HAU NGHIA, THREE IN LONG KIHANH, TWO EACH IN RUNG SAT  
SPECIAL ZONE, GIA DINH AND LONG AN, AND ONE EACH IN BIEN HOA AND  
PHUOC TUY. GVN LOST 11 KILLED (FOUR CIVILIANS) , 33 WOUNDED  
(THREE CIVILIANS), AND ONE M-16, ONE M-79 AND ONE AN/PRC-25.  
REPORTED COMMUNIST LOSSES WERE 13 KIA, ONE VC SUPPLIER ARRESTED  
IN TAY NINH, FIVE AK-47'S, THREE K-54'S, ONE RADIO AND OVER 200  
ROUNDS OF SMALL ARMS AMMUNITION, AND FOUR RALLIERS.

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2. FOLLOWING ARVN 18TH DIVISION'S RESOUNDING DEFEAT OF NVA 165TH

REGIMENT BELOW PHU GIAO OVER THE WEEKEND, BOTH PHU GIAO AND LAI KHE-BEN CAT AREAS OF BINH DUONG FIGHTING HAVE BEEN RELATIVELY QUIET OVER LAST 48 HOURS. ROAD BETWEEN PHU CUONG AND PHU GIAO (ACTUALLY NATIONAL HIGHWAY 13 TO XT 806199, PROVINCIAL ROUTE 2A TO XT889367, AND INTERPROVINCIAL ROUTE 1A ON UP TO PHU GIAO) WAS OPEN SATURDAY MORNING, JULY 28 AND FIRST ARVN CONVOY TRAVELLED MORTH, ALTHOUGH IT WAS AMBUSHED BRIEFLY. NEW TDY FSO CONSUL, REVISITING BINH DUONG PROVINCE JULY 31, WAS TOLD BY SEVERAL FRIENDS THAT ALTHOUGH THERE HAVE BEEN BRIEF CUTS IN THIS ROUTE IN PAST FEW DAYS, CIVILAIN TRAFFIC WAS MOVING NORMALLY ON THAT DAY, AND HE SAW SEVERAL BUSES ARRIVING IN PHU CUONG BEARING SACKS OF CHARCOAL, ONE OF PHU GIAO'S PRINCIPLE PRODUCTS. AT LUNCHEON FOR VISITING PROFFESOR SCALAPINO JULY 31, MR3 CG LTG MINH, HIS DEPUTY BG AN, AND 18TH DIVISION CG DAO WERE ALL ELATED ABOUT 18TH'S BIG WIN, BUT THEY ADMITTED THAT PLANS NOT YET COMPLETE FOR CONVOY TO PHUOC BINH-SONG BE AREA THROUGH MR2, OR FOR FURTHER EFFORTS TO OPEN 1A BETWEEN PHU GIAO AND DONG XOAI.

3. ICCS REGION V AND SUBREGIONAL TEAMS HAVE BEEN DOING NOTHING SINCE CANADIANS LEFT. IN XUAN LONG, INDONESIANS AND POLES HAD SQUABBLE, WITH PA & E IN MIDDLE, OVER WHICH WOULD OCCUPY FORMER CANADIAN OFFICES, WHICH WERE IN BEST SHAPE OF FOUR; LAST WORD IS THAT INDONESIANS WON. WHEN NEW TDY FSO CONSUL PAID CALL AFTERNOON JULY 30, POLDEL CHIEF LTC PANEK SLEEPLY TOLD HIM HE WAS EAGERLY AWAITING END OF HIS OWN TOUR IN VIETNAM WHICH HAS LASTED FIVE MONTHS. HUNGARIANS WERE SAID TO BE ABSENT AT A BIG HUNGDEL MEETING IN MY THO. IN LAM SON JULY 31, OTHER NEW TDY FSO CONSUL FOUND INDODELS GONE TO BIEN HOA FOR THE DAY, HUNGDEL REPORT-EDLY IN CU CHI DRINKING WITH COMPATRIOTS, AND POLES SITTING AROUND DOING NOTHING. THROUGHOUT REGION, OLD INDODELS ARE TURNING OVER THEIR JOBS TO THEIR NEWLY ARRIVED REPLACEMENTS; ORDERLY TURNOVER, INCLUDING A WEEK OF TWO OVERLAP BETWEEN TWO TRANCHES, HAS EXCITED ADMIRATION AND ENVY OF CONGEN AND TDY FSO'S HERE.

4. VIETNAMESE OFFICIALS ARE TURNING THEIR ATTENTION TOWARD EFFECT ON RVN OF POSSIBLE FALL OF GKR IN AUGUST. MR3 CG LTG MINH TOLD VISITING PROFESSOR SCALAPINO AT LUNCHEON JULY 31 THAT IF SIHANOUK RETURNED HE WOULD BE MORE PRO-COMMUNIST THAN EVER IN HIS NEUTRALISM, AND COMMUNIST WOULD HAVE ABSOLUTELY FREE SANCTUARY AND SUPPLY ROUTE IN EASTERN CAMBODIA FROM WHICH TO ATTACK SVN. MINH WARNED THAT "WE WILL NOT LET THIS HAPPEN". 18TH DIVISION  
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CG BG DAO ASKED IF THERE WAS ANY CHANCE US CONGRESS WOULD LET THE PRESIDENT EXTEND BOMBING PAST AUGUST 15. MEANWHILE, GKR AMBASSADOR VISITED TAY NINH JULY 26 AND ASKED PROVINCE CHIEF COL. THIEN FOR MILITARY SUPPORT FOR FANK OPERATION TO OPEN NATIONAL HIGHWAY 1 TO SVAY RIENG PROVINCE TOWN. COL. THIEN LIKES THE IDEA AND SAID HE WOULD BE PREPARED TO CONDUCT SYMPATHETIC OPERATIONS ON RVN SIDE OF BORDER AND PROVIDE ARTILLERY SUPPORT AND PERHAPS EVEN TROOPS ACROSS THE BORDER, ALTHOUGH SUCH AN OPERATION WOULD

UNDOUBTEDLY REQUIRE PRESIDENT THIEU'S APPROVAL.

5. AMERICAN VISITORS TO TAY NINH-SVAY RIENG BORDER POINT ALONG HIGHWAY 1 JULY 29 NOTICED THAT CAMBODIAN SIDE OF BORDER IS VIRTUALLY ABANDONED, BUT THAT SOME CROPS ARE BEING RAISED, REPORT-EDLY BY VIETNAMESE FROM VN SIDE OF BORDER. VISITORS ALSO VISITED BEN SOI AND FOUND SOME TRADE STILL TAKING PLACE; ONE FEMALE TRADER SMILINGLY CLAIMED SHE "DIDNT KNOW" WHETHER THE GOODS WERE GOING TO THE ENEMY. TAY NINH PROVINCE AUTHORITIES CLAIM THAT OF 566 "SHADOW SUPPLIERS" ARRESTED DURING JULY, NO LESS THAN 291 ARE VCI (MOSTELY C CATEGORY), INDICATING THAT COMMUNISTS ARE NOT RELYING ON SIMPLE AVARICE OF AVERAGE VIETNAMESE CITIZEN TO MAINTAIN FLOW OF TRADE.

6. COL. THIEN TOLD CONGEN JULY 31 THAT, UNABLE TO SLEEP THE PREVIOUS NIGHT, HE CALLED SUOI DA, MO CONG, AND NUI BA DEN AND TOLD THEM HE HAD A FEELING COMMUNIST SWOULD TRY SOMETHING. SURE ENOUGH, A 30 MAN SAPPER TEAM TRIED TO INFILTRATE RF OUTPOST ATOP NUI BA DEN. THIEN CALLED FOR AND RECEIVED SUPPORT FROM FOUR GUNSHIPS TO COMBAT SAPPER ATTEMPT, WHICH WAS UNSUCCESSFUL. NEXT MORNING RF FOUND BODIES OF THREE SAPPERS.

7. LONG KHANH PROVINCE CHIEF COL. TRUONG TOLD NEW TDY FSO CONSUL JULY 30 THAT NUNG AND CHINESE COMMUNITES IN TRUNG HIEN HAMLET, LOI TAN HAMLET, AND HAM THUAN VILLAGE ARE TRADING WITH COMMUNISTS, WHO ARE WILLING TO PAY HIGH PRICES, PERHAPS BECAUSE THEY ARE SHORT OF FOOD. HE SAID HE HAS INS  
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